

Amendments To The Claims

This listing of claims will replace all prior versions, and listings, of claims in the application:

Listing of Claims:

1. (Currently Amended) A self-centering unit for tire removal machines, comprising a plate provided with a series of angularly equidistant radial slots, in each of which a clamping jaw is received and slides to grip the edge of a wheel rim, said clamping jaws being directly linked together by ~~a centering linking means for moving so that said centering means moves~~ all of said clamping jaws together always equidistant from the central axis of said plate, at least one said clamping jaw being operably connected with an actuator means ~~for causing said centering linking means to translate~~ each clamping jaw in a radial direction towards or away from the central axis of the plate, wherein a positioner device is interposed between said at least one clamping jaw and said actuator means, the positioner device being arranged to vary a working position of said at least one clamping jaw relative to the actuator means without modifying the travel stroke ~~of remaining clamping jaws.~~

2. (Currently Amended) The self-centering unit as claimed in claim 1, wherein [[two]] said actuator means are ~~respectively~~ associated with two opposing clamping jaws.

3. (Previously Presented) The self-centering unit as claimed in claim 2, further comprising a positioner device for each clamping jaw associated with said actuator means.

4. (Previously Presented) The self-centering unit as claimed in claim 1, characterized in that said positioner device comprises a crankshaft provided with a crank having a crankpin, said crankpin is being received in a bushing rigid with said clamping jaw and the crank being connected to said actuator means, and means for locking said crankshaft in different working positions.

5. (Previously Presented) The self-centering unit as claimed in claim 4, characterized in that said locking means are operably connected with said crankpin.

6. (Previously Presented) The self-centering unit as claimed in claim 4, characterized in that said locking means are operably connected with the bushing.

7. (Previously Presented) The self-centering unit as claimed in claim 4, characterized in that said bushing is

provided with a lateral wall which presents at least two holes angularly spaced apart.

8. (Previously Presented) The self-centering unit as claimed in claim 4, characterized in that said means for locking said positioner device in position includes a pin.

9. (Currently Amended) The unit as claimed in ~~claim 8~~ claim 7, characterized in that said pin is elastically maintained inserted in one of the holes present in said bushing by the action of a spring.

10. (Previously Presented) The unit as claimed in claim 8, characterized in that said pin is elastically maintained in a hole present in the crankpin of the crankshaft by the action of a spring.

11. (Currently Amended) A self-centering unit as claimed in ~~claims 5 and 7~~ claim 7, characterized in that said locking means associated with said crankshaft comprise a cup-shaped body the end of which is provided with a hole, and within which there slides a pin, one end of which is intended to be received in one of the at least two holes of the bushing, whereas the opposite end emerges from the cup-shaped body via said hole and is connected to an operating knob, said pin being elastically maintained within one of the at least

two holes of the bushing by a spring which is mounted about the pin and acts between the end of said cup-shaped body and a shoulder on the pin.

12. (Previously Presented) The self-centering unit as claimed in claim 6, characterized in that said locking means associated with the bushing comprise a U-shaped latch, the base wall of which presents a rectangular aperture to be received by and to translate on two flat portions of the bushing, and the arms of which are provided with a pin and a spring, said pin being normally received in a matching hole in the crankpin of the crank by the action of said spring.

13. (Previously Presented) The self-centering unit as claimed in claim 1, characterized in that said actuator means for causing the clamping jaws to translate comprise at least one pneumatic cylinder-piston unit.